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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION IX
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STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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Honolulu, HI 96801-3378

The Honorable Mazie Hirono
United States Senate
Hawaii Office
300 Ala Moana Blvd. Rm. 3-106
Honolulu, HI 96850

Dear Senator Hirono:

Thank you for the opportunity on June 30, 2015 to brief you on the Administrative Order on Consent (AOC) our agencies are proposing for the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility to ensure long-term protection of Hawaii's public drinking water supply. We are pleased to provide additional information on this major enforcement action and the accompanying public process.

At the outset, we would like to reiterate that results of samples taken from drinking water and groundwater monitoring wells near Red Hill meet all EPA drinking water standards and therefore the water is safe for human consumption. The samples included those taken from wells operated by the Board of Water Supply and the Navy, and the test results are undisputed.

To prevent Red Hill fuel from contaminating drinking water sources in the future, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Hawaii Department of Public Health have been effective in negotiating sweeping remedial and preventive measures to effectuate comprehensive cleanup, contingency readiness, and infrastructure upgrades. The agencies have further negotiated an aggressive and phased performance schedule, backed by stringent penalty provisions and regulatory oversight, to ensure orderly implementation of these measures in the shortest time practicable.

The initial phases of the proposed AOC focus on accomplishing the extremely complex and critical work of evaluating, designing, and selecting cleanup specifics and upgrade technologies for the massive, uniquely engineered tanks. The proposed schedule requires the Navy and the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) to hit the ground running, submitting within 120 days multiple plans ranging from improving inspection protocols and assessing groundwater contamination risk to addressing cleanup methods and tank upgrade alternatives. In all, the Navy and DLA are to complete approximately 40 tasks within the first three years. The later phases focus on implementing the selected options, with rigorous and realistic deadlines to account for the enormous scale of the upgrade work and the need to fuel the military's Pacific Command.

Hearing from the public is integral to the agencies' decision-making, and we have, as a matter of discretion, elected to hold a 50-day comment period and a public hearing on the proposed settlement to maximize public participation. After the comment period ends on July 20, and before taking final action on the proposed AOC, we will document our consideration of the submitted comments in a written response and make the supporting administrative record available on our websites. Upon finalization of the AOC, we will continue to keep the public informed as we move through the process of technical evaluations, alternative analysis, option selection, and implementation.

We welcome your continued engagement and will keep you apprised of major developments in this matter. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please have your staff contact EPA's Congressional Liaison, Dean Higuchi, at (808) 541-2711, [HYPERLINK "mailto:higuchi.dean@epa.gov"], or INSERT DOH CONTACT.

Sincerely,

Jared Blumenfeld
Regional Administrator
U.S. EPA, Region 9

Keith Kawaoka
Deputy Director
Hawaii Department of Health

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